

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, May 29. 1707.

IF this Paper be all *Miscellanea*, and the Reader will excuse the Disorder of it, for however weighty Cause of the Northern Affair laid a little aside, I believe the Reader will find in the Sequel; and therefore I make no further Apology for it.

MISCELLANEA.

MY Thundering, High-Flying, Franchify'd Letter, which I presented you in my last, comes necessarily to be spoken to now; it is indeed sent me a great Way, and comes to hand, just as Mr. Dyer in his News Letter tells us the News from *Paris* of a Defeat given my Lord Galway in *Spain*, and that the Dutch Squadron had taken 3 of our great Men of War, and 30 Merchant Ships going from the *Doyens* to *Perismania*.

The Author of the Letter indeed is very quick, to send his Bluster by the very first Post; and it seems to me, he is so elevated with these two Successes, that his invincible Monarch is certainly in his fullness re-iterated in his primitive Strength, as if the Battles of *Blenheim*, *Ramillies* and *Tourin* had never been fought.

1st, I have nothing but his and Mr. Dyer's Credit for the Particulars of the News, and what Alterations the lame Post may make

make in the Account, I am sure he cannot know; We know this, that the *French* Affairs stand in great need of something, whether real or imaginary, to support them; and if they have got any Advantage in *Spain*, they are so ignorant of their Circumstances, as not to blow up the Noise of it 5 times as much as it is; since they know this also, that the Confederates can by no means have the Particulars of the Matter so soon as they.

If any Man will examine back the constant Custom of the *French* in such Cases as these, there may be good Reason enough to expect, that all this mighty Story may dwindle away to a small Matter; and if the Gross be true, we may venture to discount 3 Parts in 4 of the Particulars.

Nor are our Affairs so ill concerted, or can the Enemy rationally suppose them so, as for one Brush to be immediately beaten out of all *Spain*; nay, Monsieur has conquer'd *Portugal* too at one Dash; but have we no Troops there, to stand upon the Defensive? Has King *Charles III.* no Retreat to take Breath in? Is *Barcelona*, *Alicante*, and *Gibraltar* taken already? Is not our Fleet, and Sir *Cloudfly Shovel*, Master of the *Mediterranean*? Cannot he send a Squadron to *Final*, and bring some of Prince *Eugene's* Army to relieve them; some of those brave Fellows that with 17000 Foot beat the *French* Army of twice that Number out of their Trenches at *Turin*; and that so justly are a Terror to the *French*?

As to the *Portuguese*, indeed I think, they are not much to be rely'd upon in the Field, and I cannot but believe, if there has been a Rout, it has been among them; for as to the Confederate Troops, if they were in such a Body, as the Enemy boast of, 20000 Men, I must beg Monsieur's Pardon for believing the Story at all; and if it was only the *Portuguese*, I fancy, even the *French* themselves know too well, of how little Signification that may be to reckon much upon their Conquest.

As to Sea Affairs, that the *French* in flying Squadrons are able to do us a great deal more Mischief than we can do them, is owing not so much to their Strength, which in a Fleet dares not look us in the Face; or

to their Policy, which has often been found mistaken, but to the Quantity of our Shipping, and the Magnitude of our Trade, which spreading into every Corner of the World, cannot have Squadrons and Convoys to every Ship; and 'tis almost impossible, a *Dunkirk* Squadron could put to Sea, and not fall in with some Ships or other; and if these little Disasters, which are always inevitable in War, are so significant as to restore the Reputation of *France* lost in 3 Battles, let them go on and see, if they can retrieve the Blow in *Flanders* or in *Italy*, and if they can prevent the Confederates penetrating into the Bowels of their own Kingdom, while they are grasping at others.

But alas! What must we do for his *Portuguese* Majesty, who this Boaster has at one Blow beaten out of his Dominions, and sent for Sanctuary to *Rome*?

To this foolish Bluster I answer,

1. If it should be so, the Confederates have good Pawns in their Hands to redeem *Portugal* with; such as the Principality of *Leige*, the Electorate of *Colony* and *Bavaria*, the Duchy of *Mantua*, &c. of which 'tis time enough to talk when the Sky falls, and those Larks come to be taken.

2. The Confederates do not use to stand by their Allies, as the *French* King does, viz. abandon them when a little pinch'd by the Disaster of the War, so as he did King *James* at the last Peace, and the Duke of *Modena*; but this very Winter, whoever depends upon the Protection of the Confederates, let them go to the Emperor, to the Duke of *Savoy*, and King *Charles III.* to the *Princes of Turin* and *Barcelona*, and there they may be inform'd, in what manner the *English* and *Dutch* stand by, and defend their Allies; and that 'tis not so easie to ruin Princes, who depend upon their Support, as it is to ruin those, whose Weakness pushes them into the Protection of *France*.

But this sinking *French* Cause is no otherwise to be upheld, and 'tis a Testimony of its Weakness, that the Champions of it fly to their old Shifts of Boasting and Rhodomantading, as if the Confederates were to be bluffed out of their Cause, or beaten with Words: One would think, they have Cause enough

enough to know better, and they need but go back to *Ramellies*, or *Blanchet*, or ask the Troops of the Household, the *Gens d'Armes*, or the Regiment *Du Roy*, and they will tell them otherwise.

And so to my Letter, Sir, King Charles is not beaten out of Spain, Sir, the King of Portugal driven to Rome, or our *Leonard* Handsurpriz'd with a Boast and a Bluster; One Battle will not unravel the *Affair of Spain*, or make the Confederates abandon that Enterprize; perhaps it may quicken them to send such Supplies, as will make the French very wary, how they venture another Battle.

And now, Gentlemen, you that are melancholly and vex'd at these things; pray, what is the Matter all on a sudden? How are we frighted with Bugbears? — Are the Confederates reduced to such a Condition, that one Brush must undo them? Must the losing one Battle discourage us, or one Disappointment make us despair? Pray, Gentlemen, look back; King William lost the Battle of *London*, and yet in a short time after besieg'd *Namur*; but if you want Examples, go to the French themselves, and view their present Posture; see them in two Summers defeated in four killing Strokes *Blenheim* and *Ramellies*, *Basselous* and *Turin*, four such Blows never Nation stood, and appear'd again, and yet they show themselves in the Field, and have been able to offer you Battle a fifth time in Spain.

And now, Gentlemen, after all, let me suppose a thing, which I am sure, no wise Man, at least no Friend to the Confederate Cause, can wish for; suppose that the French Interest was so superior in Spain, as to oblige you to quit that Enterprize, and abandon your Conquests there, which is the worst any Body can rationally suggest.

Is not the French Power reduc'd to so low an Ebb in other Parts, that he sues on all Hands for Peace; and what would Spain be but a good Moriel to deliver up to bring the Confederates to a Peace?

I must confess, in my private Opinion, I am for Peace with honourable Conditions, and a Reduction of Power to a due Balance; and if France would disgorge all Encroachments on her Neighbours, whether

made by Fraud or Force, if the French King would quit Spain and all its Dominions; nay, that the *Gold for little Kingdoms* of Naples and Sicily were left to King Philip, if he would surrender his invincible Fortresses in *Alsace*, and become Original *Swiss* France or *Pyrenean France*; I suppose I am understood, if he would restore his deposed Neighbours and his persecuted Subjects, and give them the *Edict of Nantes* again, I would be for adjourning the tearing him to pieces, and dividing his Dominions among us, things some People have talk'd big of, to another time, when GOD shall think fit more visibly to direct it.

If Spain then becomes a Bribe in his Hand to buy Peace from the Confederates, if it proves a Temptation to us the sooner to grant him that Peace, I confess, I should think it the better bestow'd, and grudge the Loss the less.

As to those Phlegmatick People, who cry out upon this Loss, that Spain is gone, that we shall be glad at last to make Peace without it, and that we can never recover it again; I must be allow'd to be positive there, *No, Gentlemen, not so bad wisht.* Besides, the Nature of things contradicts that Notion; England can make no Peace without Spain.

The Balance of Trade, and The Balance of Power requires it.

As to the Affair of Trade; I believe, I need say little of the Necessity upon Britain and Ireland; not only that I have said, but that France should not have the Possession of Spain. The Change of our *Balance of Trade*, the Consumption of our Produce, the Supply of our Bullion, the Employ of our Shipping, in short the general Wealth and Greatness of Britain depends so much upon the Trade with Spain, that we can no more let the French enjoy Spain, than we can permit them to block up the River of *Thames*, or put a Garrison into the Tower of *London*.

On the other hand, we cannot be without the Trade to Spain, on Account of what we import from thence, viz. The *Wine*, *Oyl*, *Cocheneal*, *Fruit*, &c. Which is the Produce of old Spain, and above all, the *Wool*; which are, especially the *Wool*, *Oyl*, and *Cocheneal*, Capital Articles in our Manufactures.